

# Classical Greece

c.1000 B.C.E.  
~c.150 B.C.E.





# Rivals: Athens vs. Sparta



Leading city-states = Sparta & Athens → different (politics, economics, culture, etc.)

- During the 5th century BCE, Greece was dominated by two main powers: democratic Athens and the military oligarchy of Sparta.
- Athens was an open society → Athens was democratic.
  - power was based upon its command of the sea
  - was officially head of a naval alliance (the Delian League) = empire in all but name
- Sparta was a closed society → Sparta was ruled by a select few.
  - was traditionally the great land power of the Greek world
  - controlled many neighboring territories whose populations were tied to the land as slaves.

- Founded by descendants of Dorian invaders (from “dark ages”)
- Located on the Peloponnesus Peninsula (S Greece)
- Invaded neighboring city-states & enslaved people
  - Slaves were called helots
  - Slaves farmed the estates of the Spartans

# Sparta

- Helots were state **slaves**, bound to the soil
- Assigned to individual Spartans to farm
- Masters could not free or sell them
- Helots had a limited right to accumulate property, after paying to their masters a fixed proportion of the produce





# Sparta: A Military Society

- Spartans developed a militaristic society to keep control over the people
  - Started this after they suppressed a 30 year revolt by the helots
- All life revolved around the army
  - Only healthy babies were allowed to live
  - Boys entered the military at age 7
  - Stayed in the military until age 60



# Role of Spartan Women



- Women were expected to exercise and be strong
  - Spartan women trained in gymnastics, boxing, and wrestling
  - Needed to produce healthy babies → soldiers
  - Had more freedoms than other Greek women
  - Could go shopping in the marketplace, express political opinions, own property, etc. → could NOT officially take part in gov't



# Sparta's Government

- 5 Ephors – Full and final power
- Council of Elders served as Supreme Court and proposed laws to the Assembly = 28 men over age of 60
- 2 kings ruled Sparta, but had little power
  - Led the army & conducted religious services
- Assembly had least power = group of male citizens over age of 30
- Sparta was behind other city-states in economics, philosophy, science, and arts
  - Rulers afraid of change; afraid of outside influence (closed)

# Athens

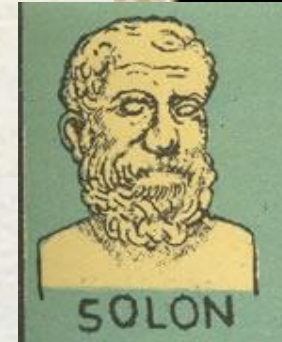
- Founded by descendants of Mycenaeans
- Lived on Attica peninsula (NE of Peloponnesus)
- Named after the goddess Athena
- Athens' citizenship included more people than Sparta's
  - **Constitution** (plan of government) = stated all free, Athenian-born men were citizens, whether they owned land or not
  - Reduced friction between social classes





# Famous Athenian Rulers

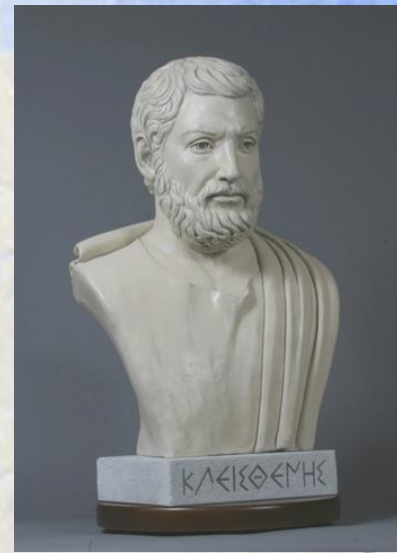
- Draco = 621 BCE
  - Issued an improved code of laws w/very harsh penalties
  - Laws were written down → everyone knew them
  - *Draconian* = word that has come to mean harsh or severe
- Solon = 594 BCE
  - Cancelled all land debt & freed debtors from slavery
  - Placed limits on how much land a person could own
  - Promoted trade by making farmers grow cash crops
  - Required fathers to teach their sons a skill
  - Allowed all citizens to participate in the Assembly & courts → closer to democracy
- Peisistratus = 546 BCE
  - Divided large estates among landless farmers
  - Helped the poor → loaned them \$ and gave them public works jobs





# Athenian Democracy

- Cleisthenes (508 BCE) established democracy in Athens
- Assembly became the most powerful political body
  - Open to all citizens
  - Citizens still only 20% of pop → excluded slaves, women, and foreign-born
- Citizens considered equal before the law; granted freedom of speech
- Jury system established
- System of Ostracism = Athenians could get rid of undesirable politicians
- Upper-class men participated in symposiums
  - **Symposium** = social session following a banquet
  - Discussed public affairs, philosophy, literature
  - Drank wine & entertained by dancers, singers, magicians, acrobats



# Athenian Education & Daily Life

- Depended on social & economic status
- Athenian citizens were required to educate their sons
- Learned about the epics, *the Iliad* and *the Odyssey*, geometry, drawing, music, gymnastics, and **rhetoric** (art of effective or persuasive public speaking or writing)
- At 18, boys entered the military for 2 years
- Men worked in the morning as artisans, farmers, or merchants
- In the afternoon – men attended the Assembly or exercised
- Girls didn't receive a formal education – were trained in household duties
- Women stayed at home → cooked and made wool cloth
- Poor women worked in markets as food sellers and cloth weavers



# SPARTA

“Militarism”



Most  
Powerful

# ATHENS

“Democracy”

## Five Ephors:

- Unlimited Power

## Assembly:

- All male citizens over 20yrs. Old
- Full & Final power

## Council of Elders:

- 28 members (Over 60yrs. of age)
- Proposed laws on which the Assembly voted

## Council of 500:

- Citizens over 30yrs.
- Chosen by lottery (lot)
- 50 from each tribe (10)
- Proposed laws to the Assembly

## Kings:

- 2 Kings elected by the Assembly
- Served as high priests, judges & army commanders

## Court:

- Chosen by lot from “citizens”
- No judge
- Juries were very large
- Voted by secret ballot

## Assembly:

- All “citizens” over 30yrs. of age
- Elected the officials & voted on major policies

## Archons:

- 9 citizens who at one time were all powerful, but after reforms the Council of 500 took over most of their powers

# War, Glory, and Decline

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## Persian and Peloponnesian Wars

### Overview:

- 400s BCE → Persian Empire had strongest military in the world
- Persian Empire wanted to invade Europe and expand
- Greek city-states cooperated in resisting Persian attacks
- After victory against Persia, the Greeks enjoyed a “golden age”
- Then – Greek city-states began to fight each other (Athens/Sparta)



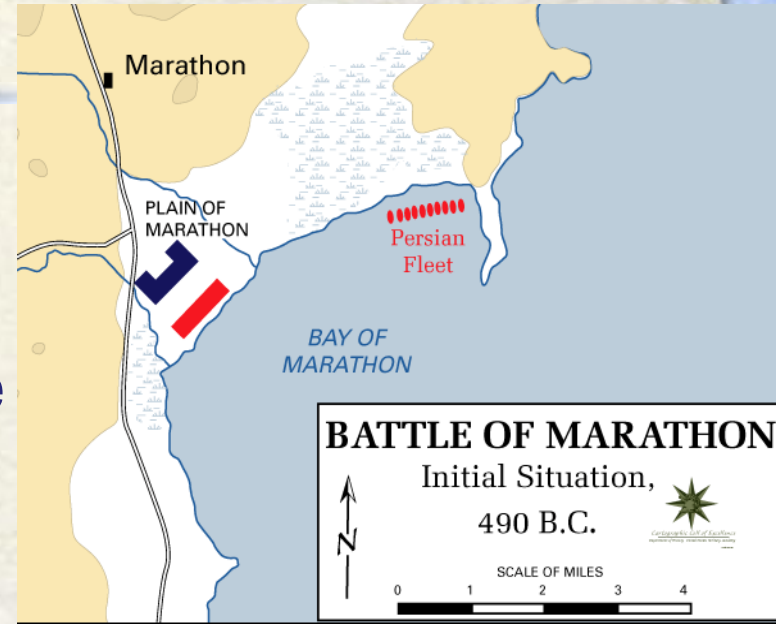
# The Persian Wars

- Persians took over the Greek city-states in Ionia (Asia Minor)
- Ionians revolted against Persians, w/help from other city-states like Athens
- Persians (led by King Darius) defeated the Ionians
- Decided to punish the mainland Greece for helping the Ionians & meddling in Persian affairs
- Persian desire to expand



# Battle at Marathon

- Darius sent a Persian fleet across the Aegean Sea to city of Marathon
- Persians waited for the Athenians
- Athenians were outnumbered & didn't move
- Persians decided to attack Athens directly
  - Loaded cavalry & infantry on ships → went to Athens
  - Athens decides to strike
  - Athens sends foot soldiers to attack Persian troops while they are in shallow water waiting to board ships
- Persians were caught off guard & lost to the Greeks





# The Plan: Battle of Salamis

- 10 years later → Darius's son Xerxes invades Greece from the N
- Xerxes brought 200,000 troops – couldn't live off the land → offshore supply ships came w/them
- Oracle at Delphi said Greeks would be safe behind a “wooden wall”
  - Athenian General Themistocles believed “wooden wall” meant fleet of ships & that they needed to challenge the Persians at sea
  - Greek army had to set up a distraction on land to build this fleet at sea
  - Greeks chose Thermopylae as place for distraction





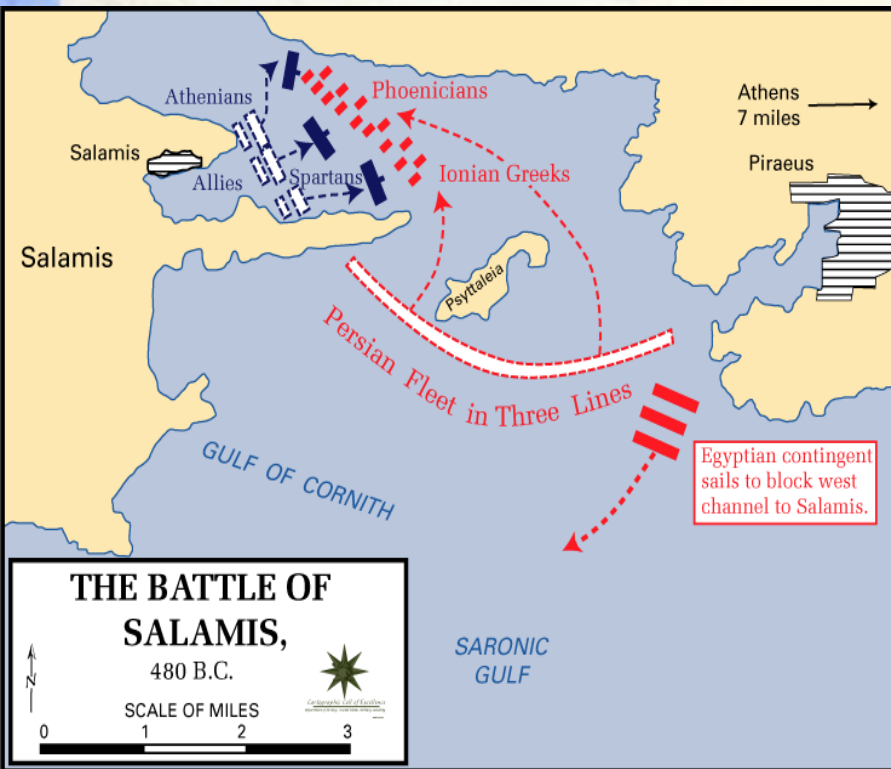
# Thermopylae: The 300

- 7,000 Greeks led by King Leonidas stood firm for 3 days
- Greek traitor showed Persians a trail they could use to attack the Greeks
  - Leonidas sent home most of his troops to save them
  - He & his Spartan troops (300) stayed to fight
  - The 300 were slaughtered, but their sacrifice gave Themistocles time to carry out his plan at sea → Salamis





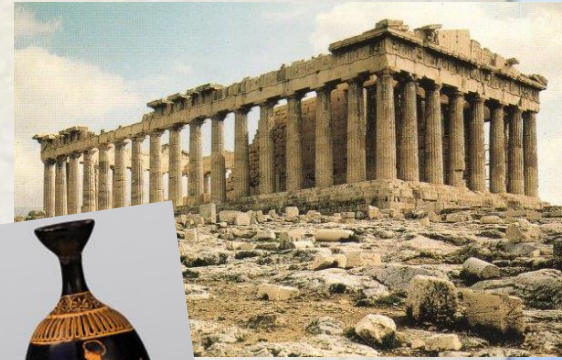
# Fighting the Battle of Salamis



- Themistocles drew the Persian fleet to the Strait of Salamis
  - Greek navy destroyed the Persian fleet in the strait
- Persians never came back → Greeks won the Persian War
- Athens emerged as a powerful city-state → Golden Age

# Golden Age of Athens

- Athenian general Pericles rebuilt Athens to become the most beautiful city in Greece
- Public buildings = fancy; Athenian homes = simple
- Most famous building = Parthenon atop the Acropolis (c.447 – 438 BCE)
  - able to build w/the help the crane.
    - Crane was developed as a tool in 515 B.C.
    - new research shows cranes used c. 700-650 B.C.E



## Quest for Beauty & Meaning

- Greek civ reached its peak in the mid-400s BCE - Athens
  - Known as the Golden Age
  - Artists created beautiful architecture, sculptures, paintings
  - Artistic style was classical = simple, graceful, and balanced
  - Advancements in philosophy, literature, and drama





# Greek Arts

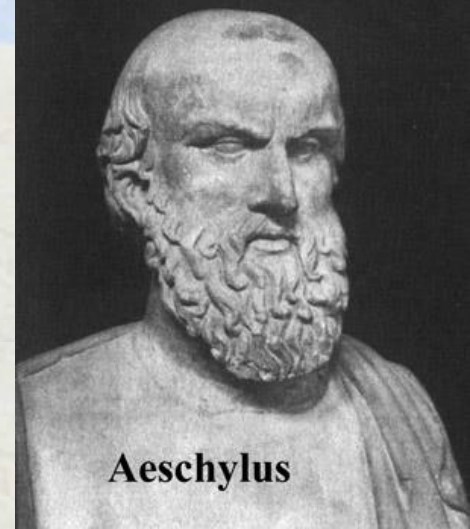
- Excelled at portraying the human form
- Some ancient Greek vases still exist
  - Different shapes for different purposes
  - Krater = 2-handled vase w/wide mouth → good for mixing water and wine
  - **Amphora** = large vase for storing oil & other supplies → decorated w/art showing mythology
  - Kylix = drinking cup → w/scenes of everyday life
- Myron = one of Greece's greatest sculptors
  - Sculpted what he thought people SHOULD look like
  - Sculpted the "Discus Thrower"
- Phidias = another great Greek sculptor
  - Created statues inside the Parthenon, including Athena
- Praxiteles = sculptor → carved realistic human sculptures



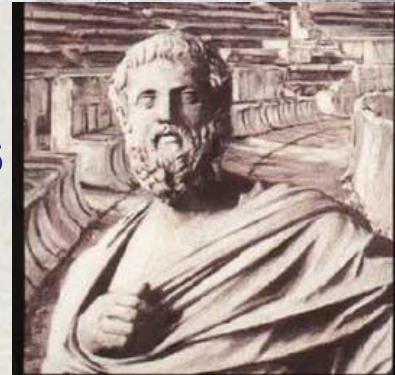


# Drama: Tragedies

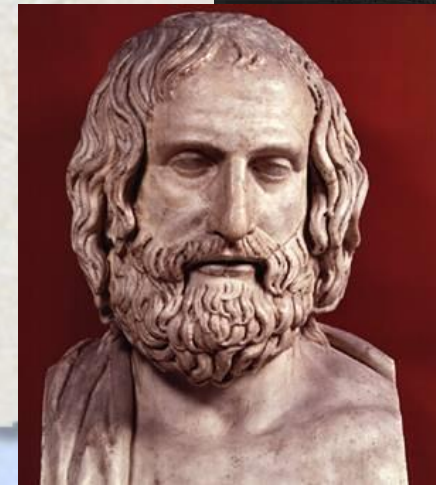
- Greeks = 1st to write and perform plays
- Earliest Greek plays = **tragedies**
  - Had unhappy endings after main character struggled against the fates
- **Aeschylus** = Greek tragedy writer who wrote 90 plays
- **Sophocles** = General in Athenian army → wrote tragedies
- Accepted human suffering as an unavoidable part of life
- Wrote *Oedipus Rex* = deals w/King Oedipus's struggle to beat the fates, but he can't win against them
- **Euripedes** = Wrote tragedies
- Hated war and plays showed the misery of war
- Focused on human behavior that brought disaster



Aeschylus

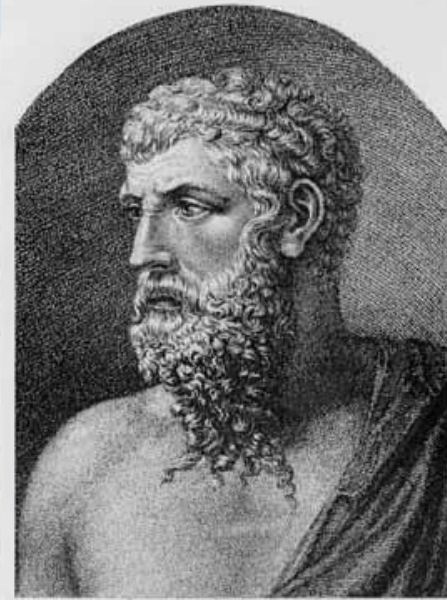


ΣΟΦΟΚΛΗΣ





# Drama: Comedies



- Had humorous plots and happy conclusions
- **Aristophanes** = most famous writer of Greek comedies
- Pokes fun at politicians, philosophers, and fellow artists
- Indirect insight into Greek society
- Provides details on the workings of gov't, legal systems, religious practices, education, & warfare in the Hellenic world
- Revealed something of the identity of the audience
- Exposes the Greeks' sense of humor



“Oh would some god, with sudden stroke,  
Convert me to a cloud of smoke!  
Like politicians' words I'd rise  
In gaseous vapour to the skies.”  
(50, Act One, Scene One, *The Wasps* by Aristophanes)





# The Olympic Games

- Greeks stressed athletics in school
- Greek men spent afternoons exercising
- Olympics held every 4 years in Olympia
  - To honor Zeus
  - Fighting and trade stopped



- Only males were able to participate
  - Women weren't even allowed to watch
  - Greek women had their own games honoring Hera
- Individual, not team events
  - Footrace, broad jump, discus throwing, boxing, wrestling, pentathlon
- Winners crowned w/olive leaves or laurel wreath; parades held in their honor
- Olympic athletes given special privileges (ex. no taxes or dinner for life)



# Greek Mind

- Greek philosophers = thinkers → produced remarkable ideas
- Laid the foundations for history, political science, biology & logic (science of reasoning)

## Sophists

- Higher ed provided by professional teachers
- Traveled from polis to polis - usually gathered in Athens - more freedom of speech there
- Said they could find the answers to all ?s
- Rejected idea: gods influence human behavior
- Challenged traditional Greek beliefs
- Believed “truth” was different for each person
- Criticized by Socrates and Plato

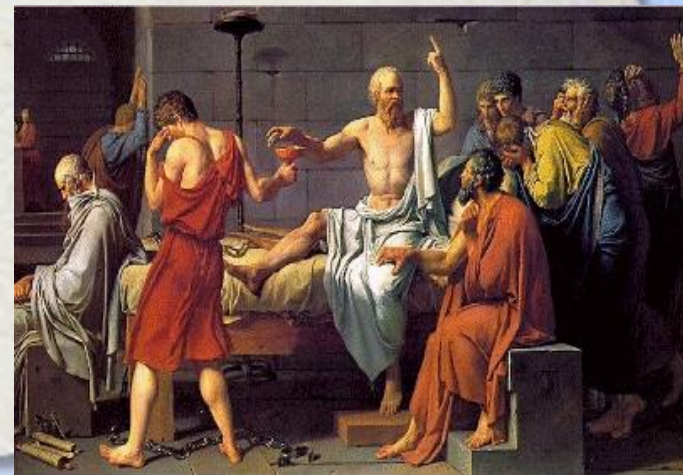




# Socrates



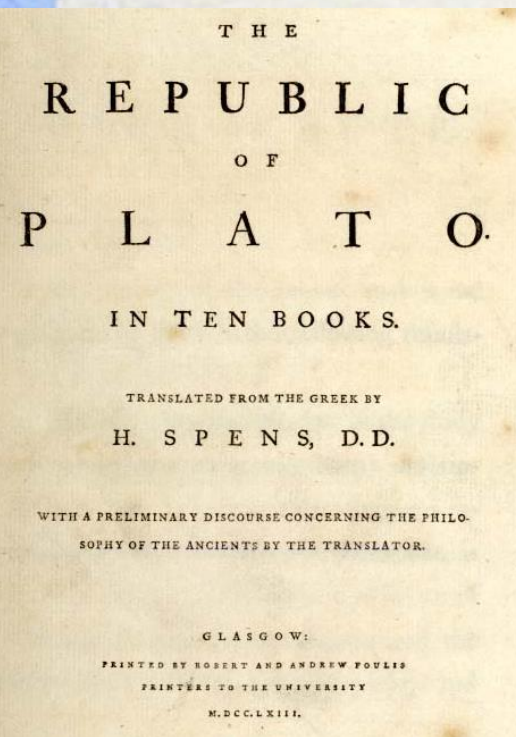
- Sculptor by trade - spent most of his time teaching
- Believed in **absolute** truth vs. relative truth
- Interested in process → people learn to think for themselves
- Developed a teaching method → **Socratic Method**
  - Asked students ?s, then argued w/their answers
  - Forced students to clarify their thoughts
- Accused of corrupting youth & not worshipping gods
- Jury found him guilty & sentenced him to death
- Killed himself by drinking poison & died among his followers





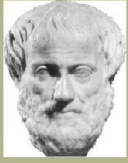
# Plato

- Born an aristocrat
- Became a teacher and opened an academy
- Recorded conversations between Socrates and his followers from memory
- Wrote earliest book on political science = “The Republic”
  - Outlined plan for what he considered ideal society & gov’t
- Disliked Athenian democracy, preferred the gov’t of Sparta
- Said the community should come before the individual



- Too much freedom = social disorder
- Disliked lower classes
- Thought only most intelligent & best-educated should participate in gov’t
- Rejected senses as a source of truth
- Real world was constructed from ideas



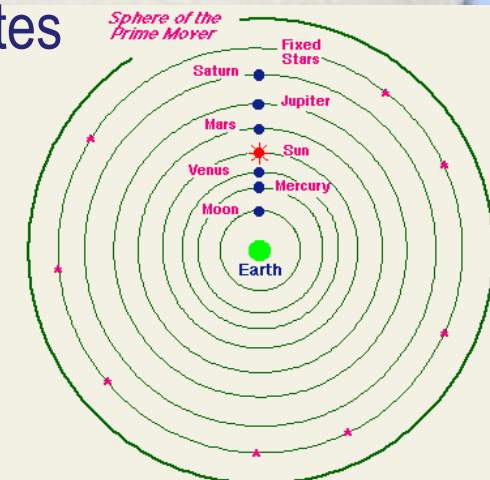


*By: Aristotle*

# Aristotle



- Wrote 200+ books ranging from astronomy to political science
- Started a school known as the Lyceum
- Taught the Golden Mean = to live moderately & avoid extremes
- Unlike Plato, Aristotle believed → knowledge gained through the senses
- 1<sup>st</sup> to observe facts → classify them into categories → make generalizations
- Some of his ideas were incorrect (ex. Earth is center of the solar system)
- Compared political structures in different Greek city-states
- Wrote a book called “Politics”
  - Idea form of gov’t is a balance b/tw a monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy
  - Middle class → best suited to rule → know how to command AND obey

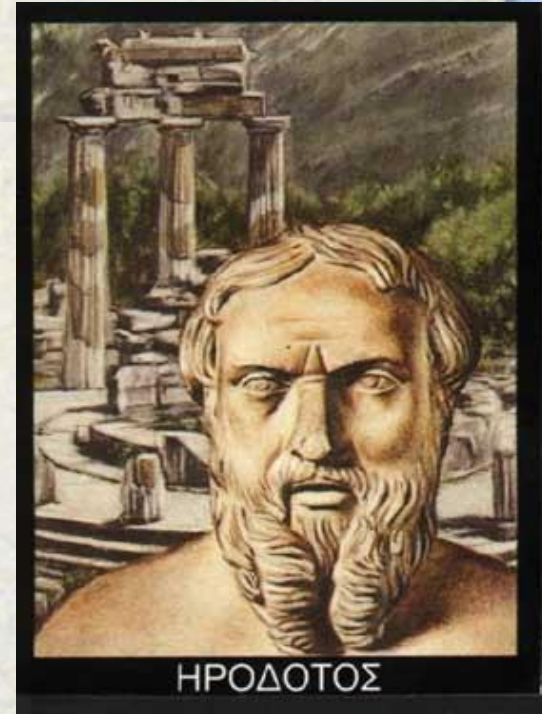


*Aristotle's Universe*

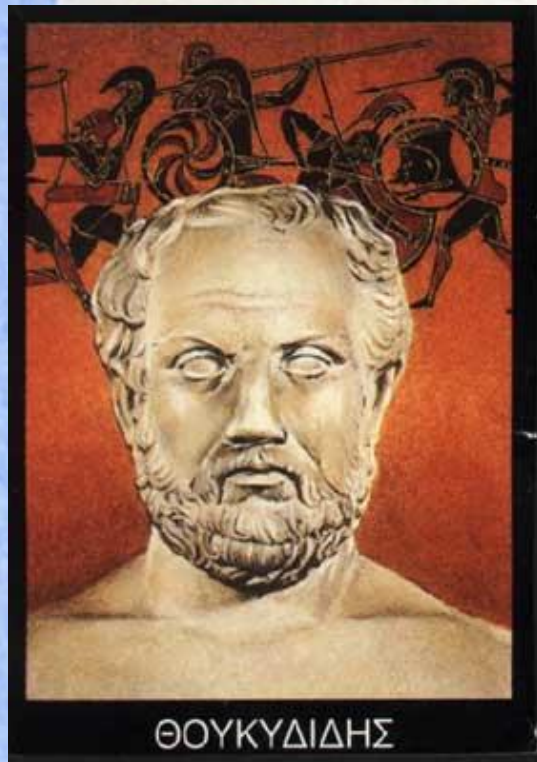


# Writers of History

- Herodotus = “father of history”
  - Wrote about the Persian War in “Historia”
  - Sometimes accepted statements that weren’t true and exaggerated numbers
  - Sometimes offered supernatural explanations of events



- Thucydides
  - Wrote about the Peloponnesian War
  - Rejected idea that deities played a role in history
  - Writings were accurate and impartial
  - Believed that future generations could learn from the past



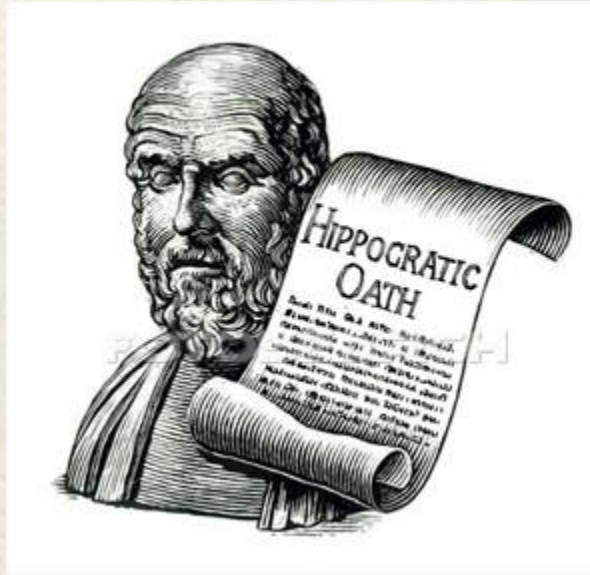
# The First Scientists

- Hippocrates → “father of medicine”

- Believed that diseases had natural causes
- Body can heal itself
- Strongly advocated proper hygiene (health care), a good diet, and plenty of rest
- Wrote a code for ethical medical conduct = Hippocratic Oath → still used today

- Greeks made scientific discoveries through observation and thought

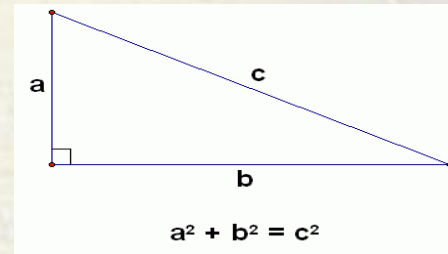
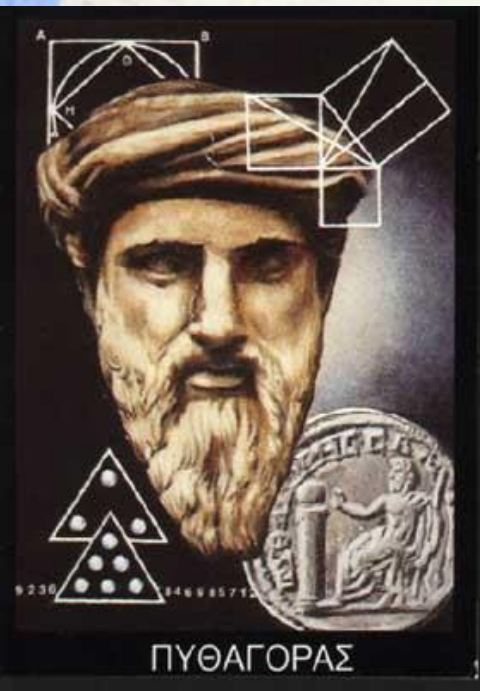
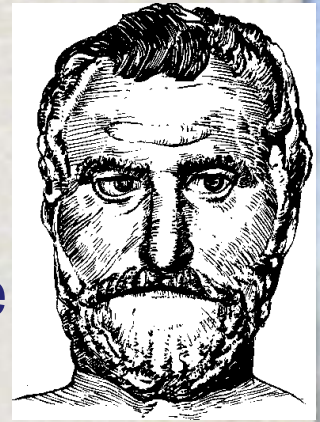
## Medicine





# Mathematics

- Seen as a pure science
- Believed they could find absolute knowledge through math
- Thales = studied astronomy and mathematics
  - Could foretell a solar eclipse
  - Said water was substance from which everything was made



- Pythagoras = tried to explain all of life in mathematical terms
  - Pythagorean Theorem = relationship of sides of a right-angled triangle
  - Said the world was round



# The Delian League

- They freed Ionia from Persian rule
- Got rid of pirates in the Aegean Sea
- Made Greece rich because trade grew
- Athens began to dominate the other city-states
  - Several city-states → alliance against Athens
  - Led by Sparta – afraid/jealous of Athens
  - Threatened by Athens' economic and political power and influence
- Persian threat remained even though they lost the war
- Most city-states (but not Sparta) joined together in Delian League to protect themselves from the Persians





# The Peloponnesian War

## 431 BCE - 404 BCE

- Peloponnesian War = fought between Athens (allies) & Sparta (allies)
- Sparta allied itself with Persia -- made a deal for their help
- Plague hit Athens -- killed 1/3 of its people (including General Pericles)
  - After Pericles died, some Athenians wanted to surrender and others wanted to keep fighting
  - No decision made -- fighting continued for years
- Several city-states switched sides & joined Sparta
- Spartans then destroyed Athenian navy
- Fields and orchards were burned
  - Athens surrendered in 404 BCE



# Effects of the War

War brought disaster to Greek city-states:

- 1) Fields destroyed
- 2) Unemployment high
- 3) Populations declined
- 4) Many men left and became mercenaries (hired soldiers) in Persian Army
- 5) Lost ability to govern themselves
- 6) Increased tension between aristocrats and commoners
- 7) Limited democracy and free political discussion
- 8) Continual fighting among city-states
- 9) Unable to resist the invasion of the Macedonians (w/Alexander the Great)

